

Cary B. Blackburn

LOUISVILLE, KY., May 18, 1875.

To the Medical Profession of Kentucky:

GENTLEMEN—Some of my friends, who were at the meeting of the Kentucky State Medical Society at Henderson, in April last, informed me on their return, that Dr. J. M. Keller had assailed my professional character before the Society.

I at once addressed him the following note:

LOUISVILLE, KY., April 10, 1875.

DR. J. M. KELLER—*Sir*: I am informed you said publicly at Henderson, before the State Medical Society, that the Louisville Academy of Medicine ought not to be recognized by the State Society, because of my being a member of said Academy, and that I was an irregular and disreputable practitioner. I now most respectfully ask you to furnish written charges and specifications to the President of the Academy on or before Friday evening, April 16, 1875.

I am sir, respectfully,

CARY B. BLACKBURN, M. D.

To this Dr. Keller answered as follows:

LOUISVILLE, KY., April 10, 1875.

DR. C. B. BLACKBURN—*Sir*: Your communication is just handed me by Dr. Wathen. What I did and said at Henderson in my effort to shut the Academy of Medicine out from representation was this: I stated that said Society was composed in part of doctors who took contracts with certain societies in this city to attend their members for (I believe) one dollar per head per year, and, I believe, gave your name among others who are reported to me by members of said societies as making such contracts.

I am not a member of the Academy of Music (Medicine), and will, therefore, prefer no charges, failing as I do to recognize it as other than a bogus concern.

Very respectfully,

J. M. KELLER, M. D.

Hoping that Dr. Keller would see the justice of bringing his charges before some proper tribunal, I wrote to him again as follows:

LOUISVILLE, KY., April 12, 1875.

J. M. KELLER, M. D.—*Sir*: You say you gave my name among others, etc., in reference to a charge you made in a public manner at Henderson. Your remarks about the Academy of Medicine require no notice. I repeat my request for the charges and specifications.

Sir, you must know that the first section of Sixth Article on "Duties of Physicians to each other," &c., of the Code of Ethics, requires you to submit your charges against me to a "Court Medical."

I am, sir, a member of the State Society as well as of the Academy, and demand as a matter of justice that you give me on paper the substance, if not the words.

of your charges against me, that I may ask an investigation of the same by the Louisville Academy of Medicine. Trusting that your sense of justice to both you and me will impel you to this course,

I am, sir, truly yours,

CARY B. BLACKBURN, M. D.

The following is Dr. Keller's reply to my note:

LOUISVILLE, KY., April 12, 1875.

DR. C. B. BLACKBURN—*Sir*: Your second note at the hands of Dr. Wathen is just handed me. I repeat my assertions as to your contracts with societies, and at the same time politely decline to bring you before a tribunal such as is afforded by the so-called "Academy of Medicine," knowing full well the force of the old saying, "It is like going to h—ll for justice when the Devil is judge."

It will afford me pleasure at any time, before a properly constituted Court Medical, to give you an opportunity of disproving your society contracts—and in order that you may not despair of having an opportunity, I will intimate to you that, in all probability, the occasion will very soon offer.

Respectfully yours,

J. M. KELLER, M. D.

Finding it impossible to get Dr. Keller to make any specific charges against me, I addressed a note to the Academy of Medicine, asking an investigation, as follows:

LOUISVILLE, KY., April 16, 1875.

To the President and Members of the Louisville Academy of Medicine:

WHEREAS, My professional character has been assailed by J. M. Keller, M. D., a member of the profession of this city; and whereas the said J. M. Keller, M. D., has, as will appear from the enclosed correspondence, positively declined to prefer written charges and specifications against me before your honorable body; and whereas the said Keller and your petitioner are not both members of any one local society in this city where we reside, I request that you will appoint a Court Medical to investigate the truth or falsity of the charge against me; and I would further pray that the said Court Medical be instructed to make the fullest possible investigation of the whole matter, at their earliest convenience, in order that full justice may be done to all the parties concerned, and ask that the said Dr. Keller be summoned to appear before the Court to substantiate his charges.

With great respect, I am your humble servant,

CARY B. BLACKBURN.

Charges were hereupon regularly drawn up as admitted by Dr. Keller to have been made by him against me, and a committee appointed by the Academy to investigate the same. The following is the report of the committee:

LOUISVILLE, Ky., April 23, 1875.

To the President and Members of the Louisville Academy of Medicine :

The undersigned committee, appointed at your last regular meeting to investigate the charges preferred against Dr. C. B. Blackburn (a fellow of this Society), of violating the Code of Ethics of the American Medical Association, and the rules and regulations of the Louisville Academy of Medicine, would respectfully state, that in obedience to your behest, the chairman of the committee gave notice to the members of the same, bearing date the 22d inst., to meet him at 1 o'clock on the following day at the office of Dr. J. M. Keller, who had been notified of the meeting, and requested to be present.

The chairman and members of the committee met at or near the hour and at the place designated, and remained some half an hour or more, but Dr. Keller did not make his appearance.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

THOS. J. GRIFFITH,
R. M. ALEXANDER,
DANIEL GOBER.

After adopting the report of the committee, the following resolution was adopted by the Society.

Resolved, That after a full and fair investigation of the charges preferred against Dr. C. B. Blackburn, the Society find that the same are not sustained.

Dr. Keller having publicly assailed me, I have deemed it due to my character to publish this communication. I will only add, that the Academy of Medicine numbers nearly a hundred members, among whom are the oldest, and many of the most eminent, physicians of Louisville, and that being recognized by the Kentucky State Medical Society and by the American Medical Association, it may possibly hope to get on without Dr. Keller's recognition.

Most respectfully,

CARY B. BLACKBURN, M. D.

